

## ***Drinking Water – Maryland’s most precious resource!***

Attention Property Owner:

**Howard County Health Department, Bureau of Environmental Health** recommends that anyone who obtains their water supply from a private well have their well water tested regularly. Although private well water can provide excellent quality drinking water, the water can also become tainted with bacteria and chemicals from unseen sources.

### ***You are responsible for maintaining the safety of your drinking water supply***

<b>What should you test for?</b>	<b>When should you have your well water tested?</b>
<p>Although it is impractical to test for all possible contaminants, two inexpensive tests can serve as indicators of the overall condition of your well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Coliform Bacteria:</b> Coliform bacteria doesn't usually cause illness, but serve as an indicator that disease – causing organisms could get into your well.</li> <li>● <b>Nitrate:</b> Nitrate passes very easily through soil to groundwater from sources such as fertilizers, septic systems and animal wastes.</li> </ul>	<p>Generally, every 3 to 5 years, or:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If a family member is experiencing recurrent gastrointestinal problems.</li> <li>● Whenever you notice a change in taste or color of the water.</li> <li>● After any type of well repairs or if you notice that the well cap is not secure.</li> <li>● Prior to selection and installation of any treatment system.</li> <li>● For nitrate, if you have a pregnant women or newborn baby drinking the water.</li> </ul>

- To have your water tested click on List of Approved Drinking Water Laboratories Certified in Maryland below.  
[http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Water/water\\_supply/Documents/MD\\_Cert\\_Drink\\_Water\\_Lab\\_List.pdf](http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Water/water_supply/Documents/MD_Cert_Drink_Water_Lab_List.pdf)
- Contact the Howard County Health Department at 410-313-1773 for assistance, or go to [www.hchealth.org](http://www.hchealth.org) (click on *Bureau of Environmental Health* then *Community Hygiene Program* for more information)
- Additional well information can be found at <http://water.epa.gov/drink/info/well/index.cfm>

Dear Homeowner / Resident:

In our ongoing efforts to improve our ability to protect groundwater sources and the public's health, the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) is continuing our countywide project to precisely locate all private drinking water wells in the county. You are receiving this letter because our records indicate that your property is, or was at one time, served by an individual drinking water well.

The HCHD wishes to visit your property so that we can physically locate your well and precisely record its location using a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit. The purpose of this project is to create a Geographic Information System (GIS) database that will allow the Health Department to quickly and precisely identify groundwater wells that could be impacted by on-site construction activities, septic system installations, contamination incidents such as spills, etc. Ultimately, this GIS-enhanced ability will help the Health Department provide improved service and better protect county residents who derive their drinking water from a private well.

Staff from the HCHD will be visiting each property identified as having a well and will spend approximately 3 to 5 minutes at each well location in order to collect precise GPS coordinates for the well. In addition, a visual observation of the well's condition will be noted and shared with the property owner /resident. Any observations and/or recommendations given is strictly informative and not a reflection of any well requirements that shall be imposed onto the property owner. The well head will not be opened or impacted in any way during this process. HCHD staff will be moving quickly from property to property (similar to a meter reader). All HCHD staff will be carrying credentials and will be clearly identified. The Howard County Police Department has been advised of this project.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation with this project. In order for our staff to identify and map the location of your water well, we are seeking your permission to briefly visit your property. You may provide permission, or decline access to your property by **using one of the following options:**

- *call our office to schedule an appointment*
- *complete the "Online" Form*



**Instructions for locating our Online form**

Go to: <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Health/Forms-Applications/Well-Mapping-Form>

For further assistance, you may also contact the Community Hygiene Program, at (410) 313-1773.

Sincerely,



Bert Nixon, Director  
Bureau of Environmental Health